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A Beginner's Guide to Business

By

Unknown

This book is a comprehensive manual on all aspects of business, including shop ownership, becoming a landlord, and how to make a killing in the property market. On running your own shop it recommends you start by buying a stall, before moving up to a full-sized store. While you can set prices higher or lower than the town standard, it should be noticed that this will not only affect your profits, but peoples opinion on your moral standing in the community as well. It's also a good idea to get along with your employees as they will work harder for you, which will in turn improve turnover. And don't forget, as the owner, you will enjoy special prices on items!

The chapter on owning property emphasises the importance of proper management, both in terms of improvement to the houses you either rent out or sell, and your relationships with tenants. The rent you charge will have a profound effect on your reputation. Do you want to be know as a fair landlord or a tyrannical one?

A Hero's Journey I

By

Unknown

Page 126, “You stand before a rocky mountain and look up to the ragged clouds cloaking it’s peak. Suddenly, you feel a cold wind on your face. It seems to come from a cavern straight ahead. It’s black mouth wails to engulf you as you move closer. If you choose to enter the cave, go to page 241. If you would rather take the path west of the mountain, to page 37.”

A Hero's Journey II

By

Unknown

Page 241. “The cavern sends a chill down your spine as you are swallowed into it’s shadow. The stench of rotting flesh is overpowering. You light your torch and its flickering flame illuminates a terrible collection of bones, half-chewed limbs, and thick gore. You notice a hand protruding limply from a mass of tissue, the glint of emerald on one of its fingers. As you bend down to pick it up, a huge roar echoes from behind you. You turn around to see a Undead horned Bear, its face a nightmarish contortion of teeth, saliva, and scars. You face it ready to attack. If you rush towards it with your sword, go to page 112. If you try to direct an arrow into one of its eyes, go to page 294. If you decide to cast a fireball, go to page 89.”

A Hero's Journey III

By

Unknown

Page 167, “The wasp-headed creature at the door is fooled by the pass you took from Koroln’s corpse and lets you in. The dark robes you wear as a disguise can’t quite disguise your corpulent appearance, but the tavern’s patrons pay little attention to you. The lack of windows in this underground chamber, the black curtains hanging raggedly from the walls and small number of torches, make it hard to see anyone clearly. In one corner is a group of assassins, hunched over a table and whispering. Near the door, two lizard-men, a woman of great beauty but evil red eyes and a large man, whose hirsute face gives him away as infected with a Balverine’s bite, are playing a card game. To their left, the bar man scowls as he pours a thick, black liquid into a skull. If you order a drink, go to page 15. If you would rather join the card game, go to page 101. If you wish to sit close to the assassins and maybe try to listen in on their conversation, go to page 76.”

A History of the Guild

By

Unknown

A passage at the back of the book has been marked out: “The tale of Avo’s Tear, the mythical sword that would one day strike down all evil, emerged from the death of Solcius, the most powerful Mage ever to train in the Guild. Solcius famously died closing a vortex that threatened to engulf the city of Bowerstone. In order to perform this most dangerous of spells, Solcius required an object to focus all his Will into one point in space. He took the sword from a fallen guard and imbued it with all his powers before casting it into the mystical void. The explosion killed Solcius and those around him, and the sword disappeared along with the vortex. A legend soon began to spread: that the sword still existed in this world, hidden somewhere deep in the Guild, and awaiting a Hero worthy of wielding the formidable might of its blade.”

A Love Story

By

Unknown

Ralf was a hero who fought bravely and well. But his face showed the scars of battle and frankly, no woman would look at him. In his despair, he robbed the ancient trader barons of Greatwood and bought a house and a pile of presents to give out. Women fell at his feet and eventually he chose a gorgeous one to marry. But too late, he realized that the type of female who is impressed by gifts and houses is too shallow to make a good bride. So Ralf decapitated her and waved her lovely head about in triumph. And the phrase 'Trophy Wife' was born.

AdventureQuest: A Select Your Own Endeavour Book

By

Montgomery Array

Spending all they years of your young life on a small farm in a backwater county has made you restless. Who knows what flight of fancy or idle daydream first sparked your desire for adventure. But once ignited, the flames of wanderlust could not be extinguished - not even by the water of looking at things in more realistic terms and perhaps considering a career in excavation. Your parents tried to reason with you, but the protest of the old ring hollow in the ears of a strong-willed young farm boy or girl like you. And so now you stand at a crossroads. It's a nice one, with newly painted signs and a bench. If you want to head east, toward the ominous ruins, turn to page 2. To go west, towards the ancient forest, turn to page 4. To head north, toward the snow-covered mountains, turn to page 156. If you want to go south, which is back home, read this page again

Alchemy and Immortality

By

Vivian Quicksand

Many have sought the Elixir of Immortality, the Secret Wisdom of the Ages, the Hidden Lore that the Emerald Tablet speaks of. Few have found it. And by few, I mean none, and by none, I mean one. And by one, I mean me. And by mean, I mean imply. Anyway—I have found the elixir, and now everlasting youth is mine! At last, the ultimate dream I realised: to live for all eternity. In that time I will ponder the greatest questions... such as, do I stay my current age from now on, or could I actually be younger forever? And if so, how would that age be chosen? And will my body still change according to diet and exercise, or is there a sort of implied perfect health that goes along with the longevity? And what happens if I'm shot or I fall off a cliff, can that kill me? Am I only safe from a death by natural causes? And what about fertility? Will I be able to have children 10,000 years from now? Hmmm... I might actually need longer than eternity for some of these.

Arban's Thaumaturgica

By

Unknown

“The ancient volume describes the forgotten rituals and magic of Hook Coast, including ways of erecting and disabling force fields. It’s written in an arcane language you can’t decipher. Perhaps the Guildmaster will be able to read it.”

Attack of the Killer Puffins

By

Dans Mourir

None knew from whence they came, nor to whence they would go upon completing their terrible orgy of bloodshed. All that was known was that they came, and armageddon came with them. They killed everyone, and in unimaginably horrible ways. Ways that, even if they were imaginable, you wouldn't want to imagine them, believe me. Their rampage left the village decimated, and for generations the few survivors and their offspring could barely bring themselves to speak the name of that most terrifying of evils: "Puffin."

Becoming a Parent

By

Unknown

So you're happily married, eh? Then perhaps it's time to have kids! Folklore says that girls are conceived at dawn and boys at dusk, but then again, folk say all kinds of crazy things. You will need to make sure your new family has enough money to live on. Keep them happy with gifts and a nice home, and you can count yourself a successful parent.

Belching For Beginners

By

Unknown

(This is an Expression manual)

Do you find your social life suffers from your inability to burp? This book will teach you how in one easy step. (Use to learn the Belch expression.)

Book of Spells

By

Unknown

BERSERK

Berserk sends the Hero into a frenzy, with greatly increased speed and strength.

FORCE PUSH

This spell creates a powerful blast of energy which radiates out from the caster, sending nearby enemies sprawling. Useful when greatly outnumbered.

ENFLAME

Enflame blasts the area surrounding the caster with a wave of fire.

LIGHTNING

This spell creates an arc of pure energy which leaps from the fingertips of the caster to the target. Higher Levels can strike more than one foe at a time.

FIREBALL

The magician's favourite! This creates a ball of fire in the palm of the caster's hand which flies toward the target when released. Larger Fireballs are extremely explosive.

ASSASSIN'S RUSH

This spell propels the caster through space in the blink of an eye. If a victim

is targeted, the spell enables the caster to move behind this unfortunate instantaneously. The thief's greatest friend!

TURNCOAT

This Insidious spell confuses the enemy, turning the target into an unwitting ally.

SLOW TIME

Slow Time affects the very fabric of time itself: slowing everything in Albion to a crawl.

MULTI-ARROW

Once this spell is cast, each arrow fired is magically transformed into a multitude of death delivering projectiles, causing much greater damage.

SHIELD

For the most passively minded, this allows the caster to reduce the damage of enemy attacks by surrounding him in a protective sphere of energy.

HEAL

This allows the caster to trade in his magical energy for health. A magician's Favourite!

DRAIN LIFE

A singularly unpleasant spell. Drain Life allows the caster to heal himself by draining his enemies life-force.

MULTI-STRIKE

This spell imbues the user's blade with the ability to strike multiple times with a single blow. Combined with other spells, this little trick is devastating.

BATTLE CHARGE

The Battle Charge propels the caster forward at great speed, smashing any in his path, and blasting all nearby aside.

SUMMON

Summon pulls an allied creature's soul from the netherworld to help the caster. If this creature kills another, it is replaced by the soul of the newly fallen victim.

GHOSTLY SWORD

This spell summons a number of ethereal blades to attack on the caster's behalf.

Book of Worship

By

Unknown

(This is an Expression manual.)

This extremely rare guide for sycophants and serial flatterers was thought to be lost. (Use to learn the Worship expression.)

Brendan's Diary

By

Brendan

This appears to be a page from an explorer's diary, recording the details of an expedition of this cave. "Third day. My hand is shaking from exhaustion, but I must remain vigilant. I almost nodded off last night as we camped around the fire, but manage to keep an eye on Erik and Drake. I have seen their greedy glimmer in their eyes. They mean to make the treasure theirs! Perhaps it is time to make use of the poison. Brendan."

Cold Lips

By

Meredith Sock

This erotic novel by bestselling author Meredith Sock, tells the story of Eduarda, the beautiful maid of a wealthy household, who ruthlessly sleeps with every family member to get what she wants. Eduarda climbs her way through the service ranks to become the personal aid of Lady Sickly. When Lady Sickly is found murdered, all fingers point to the voluptuous maid, but did she really poison her mistress so that she could marry Lord Sickly, or has she been framed by one of her jealous lovers? Only Randy the gardener knows the truth. Despite receiving scathing reviews, “Cold Lips” was a runaway hit with the many servants who toil behind the scenes of Fairfax Gardens.

Come Hither, Dear

By

Unknown

(This is an Expression Manual)

You've bought gifts for the object you desire, you've opened your heart to them, and now you want your reward. This book will teach you how to take that final step. (Use to learn the Come Back to My Place expression.)

Creatures of Albion Book I

By

Unknown

NYMPHS

Nymphs are ethereal, yet dangerous creatures. There are three known types. The Water Nymph, The Wood Nymph and the very powerful Succubus Nymph. All will be eager to send you to an early death if you stray across their path.

MINIONS

Mindless, attacking animals bred by the Old Kingdom wall-guards for attacking intruders, minions are keen to rip the flesh of anything in their way. The only thing they fear are their masters and the bigger, more powerful minions known as Dreadwings.

SCORPIONS

Born of the fires of ancient Bolewood, scorpions are armoured beasts with evil hearts. Hushed voices tell of larger scorpions, bred in captivity for fighting.

SCREAMERS

Horrific entities caught in the netherworlds. Screamers have long struck fear into the population at night. They roam the land and are dangerous in their attacks.

Creatures of Albion Book II

By

Unknown

WASPS

The Wasps have stings that more than match their size. They are aggressive and can kill if enough venom is injected into their foes. Their aerial antics make them tough to hit, and weary travellers should especially fear the Wasp Queen, leader of the hive.

BEETLES

The Beetles of Albion's woods are tough, dangerous foes when they attack en masse. Those skilled at weaponry are required to defeat them. Villagers, even armed, strong ones risk great harm if they take on a nest of Beetles.

TROLLS

Born from beneath the ground of Albion, trolls are ancient, powerful beings. The Earth Trolls are single-minded and extremely dangerous, but the mighty Rock Trolls inspire awe and fear in all who behold them. Lumbering hulks they may be, but they make mighty foes and demand respect from even the most powerful heroes.

UNDEAD

The Undead are unthinking and impervious to what mortals consider pain. Wave upon wave will keep advancing until they overpower their victims, so the only way to stop them is with extreme force.

Creatures of Albion Book III

By

Unknown

BALVERINES

The wolf-people of the forests, Balverines are strong, cunning and fast. They are evil through and through, but especially so are the stronger, more cunning White Balverines born of a full moon. These are said to be the result of those bitten who resisted the poison and, instead of dying, became one with the clan. The Old Kingdom tells of silver weapons built especially to kill these White Balverines.

HOBBS

The under-race of the dells and hollows, the Hobbes are short and squat half-people whose genetics are entwined with the mud and slime of the deep country. Often dim but always aggressive, Hobbes are led by tougher leaders. The brainiest can even learn to use spells, some say.

KRAKEN

Albion is surrounded by nine seas, and the Krakens rule them all. These aquatic creatures were here long before the Kingdoms of Old, yet few have ever seen one. And not even the most boastful Heroes claim to have defeated a Kraken in combat.

DRAGON

What more can be said about these fiery creatures who own the mountains? A race in decline, they were once revered, but now they are just an ancient, albeit powerful and dangerous relic of the Old Kingdom.

Creatures of the North

By

Rewer

This well-worn book was written by the local Snowspire historian and adventurer, Rewer, but one of the blank pages at the front has recently been filled with Scythe's uneasy handwriting: "This ancient volume contains the only description of Summoners I have found. Their presence at this time is highly unnatural. They should have faded with the centuries as I have. Unless something else has returned them to this world..."

ICE TROLL

Closely related to the Earth and Rock Trolls, these impressive beasts have adapted to their arctic environment. Their frozen attacks are not to be taken lightly.

SUCCUBUS QUEEN

Related to the Nymphs of mainland Albion, though many have found them more resilient. Their death is not brought about easily. They are able to conjure up what local people call Wraiths, though many scholars prefer the term hoar Skeleton.

WRAITHS

These are Undead creatures, whose frosty visage perfectly mirrors the icy spectre of death that permeates them.

SUMMONERS

Colossal undead warriors reanimated through dark magics. Older accounts

record their ability to summon creatures from the underworld to unleash upon their victims. More recent observers—those few who have survived—have dismissed this as a myth. Still, their name remains, as does their reputation as one of the most powerful creatures to ever walk our lands. Their command of lightning is especially arresting.

Dangerous Things: Gunpowder

By

Horatio Slacks

Gunpowder is the most destructive tool ever devised by Man. It has forever changed the face of warfare, allowing an untrained peasant to kill a highly disciplined, professional soldier with virtually no effort. Scholars have begun to speculate: could this formidable development destroy the concept of chivalry, perhaps even that of mercy? Only time will tell, and this troubling debate has only just begun. Also, gunpowder is used in fireworks to celebrate various occasions, and if you light off even a quite small one in your hand, it will hurt very, very badly. I cannot overstate how unthinkable how horrible the pain is.

Dangerous Things: Industrial Machinery

By

Horatio Slacks

The rapidity with which industry has developed in Albion is nothing short of extraordinary. One need only visit one of Bowerstone Industrial's great factories to witness the majesty of modern technology in action. However, while visiting a factory one must be aware of one's surroundings. Stand too close to exposed machinery, and one could lose a finger or even an arm. Or a spouse. In what was ultimately ruled to be a regrettable accident, wherein no party was at fault.

Dangerous Things: Ladders

By

Horatio Slacks

Ladders have myriad uses, being of great value if one needs to assault a castle or clean the gutters. However, whatever the task at hand, the climber should take care to ensure the ladder is properly balanced and safely angled, and that a third party is present to 'spot' the climber. Further, this 'spotter' should be carefull to stand on the outside of the ladder, not underneath, and should ideally move quickly out of the way in the event the climber accidentally drops a very large joiner's mallet. In retrospect, a more apt name for this treatise should have been 'Dangerous Things: Joiner's Mallets'.

Dangerous Things: Lightning

By

Horatio Slacks

Getting struck by lightning is a very Bad Thing. Usually it'll kill you outright. You have a one in two million chance of being struck by lightning. The best defence is never to walk outside during a storm. Even safer—don't go outside at all. Ever. Find a nice big building like an observatory and just hide in there.

Dangerous Things: Stargazing In Remote Areas

By

Horatio Slacks

Remote Locations are ideal for contemplating the night sky, as there is generally little in the way of ambient light. However, these ideal viewing conditions may come at a price. Witness the occasion upon which I went stargazing in a particularly remote and forgotten graveyard. So absorbed was I with the magnificent spectacle of the heavens that when a figure approached, I assumed it was another admirer of the cosmos. I attributed his shambling gait to amazement at the majesty of the stars: his low moans to wonder. I began to pontificate on the constellation Quite Large Spoon Majoris, and when the newcomer did not respond, I lowered my eyes, only to have him attempt to put them out with a rusty pike clenched in his skeletal hand. He was largely unsuccessful in this endeavor, I am happy to report. Still, the episode was a bit unsettling.

Dead Handy

By

Unknown

(This is an Expression manual.)

Norbert the Narcoleptic invites you to join in Albion's latest craze; pretending to be dead. Try it, you might like it. (Use to learn the Play Dead expression.)

Dog Book: The Backflip

By

Rufina Musket

Use this tome of wisdom to teach your dog one of the most spectacular canine tricks ever seen: The Backflip! Impress villagers with your dog's incredible deeds of daring do! To see him perform a backflip, show of a trophy or play a game of Hat, Headband, Moustache.

Dog Tricks! Backflip

By

Rufina Musket

Animal lover, dog trainer and circus owner Rufina Musket, wrote this series of books to pass on her intimate knowledge of canine psychology. Use this book to teach your dog how to do a backflip.

Dog Tricks! Begging

By

Rufina Musket

Animal lover, dog trainer and circus owner Rufina Musket, wrote this series of books to pass on her intimate knowledge of canine psychology. Use this book to teach your dog how the begging trick. To see him do this, use a pick-up line, ask someone back to your place, or do a spot of begging yourself.

Dog Tricks! Bunny Hop

By

Rufina Musket

Animal lover, dog trainer and circus owner Rufina Musket, wrote this series of books to pass on her intimate knowledge of canine psychology. Use this book to teach your dog how to hop like a bunny. To see him do this, dance, laugh, whistle, play the lute, or strike a heroic pose.

Dog Tricks! Hide Snout

By

Rufina Musket

Animal lover, dog trainer and circus owner Rufina Musket, wrote this series of books to pass on her intimate knowledge of canine psychology. Use this book to teach your dog how to hide his face with his paws. To see him do this, either belch or fart.

Dog Tricks! Play Dead

By

Rufina Musket

Animal lover, dog trainer and circus owner Rufina Musket, wrote this series of books to pass on her intimate knowledge of canine psychology. Use this book to teach your dog how to play dead. To see him do this, you can either play dead yourself or accuse someone of being a chicken.

Dog Tricks! Tail Chase

By

Rufina Musket

Animal lover, dog trainer and circus owner Rufina Musket, wrote this series of books to pass on her intimate knowledge of canine psychology. Use this book to teach your dog how to chase his own tail. To see him do this, perform a vulgar thrust or a victory arm pump, or put on a hand puppet show.

Dog Tricks! Targeted Urination

By

Rufina Musket

Animal lover, dog trainer and circus owner Rufina Musket, wrote this series of books to pass on her intimate knowledge of canine psychology. Use this book to teach your dog how to relieve himself on those you want to mock and infuriate. To see him do this, point and laugh at someone, insult them, or tell them to kiss your ass.

Dog Tricks! The Growl

By

Rufina Musket

Animal lover, dog trainer and circus owner Rufina Musket, wrote this series of books to pass on her intimate knowledge of canine psychology. Use this book to teach your dog how to growl at people you don't like. To see him do this, use any Scary expression.

Dog Tricks! The Wave

By

Rufina Musket

Animal lover, dog trainer and circus owner Rufina Musket, wrote this series of books to pass on her intimate knowledge of canine psychology. Use this book to teach your dog how to wave. To see him do this, blow a kiss, give a present, make someone follow or wait for you, or give them a thumbs up or down.

Dusty Notebook

By

Elvira Grey

“I, Elvira Grey - known from this day forth as Lady Grey - have come of age and, finally, to the power I have so longed for. This day marks a turning point for the Grey family; an end to weakness, indecision and regret. As I look back on my past, my only dissatisfaction lies in wasted time. I wish that the masked messenger, whose words made the world so clear to me, had arrived earlier in my life. Tonight I take my leave of this house, and begin anew. Bowerstone will find its new leader a formidable woman...

Eyes of a Killer

By

Unknown

This handbook gives some tips on making yourself scarier to other people. Performing acts of great evil, have certain tattoos applied to your body and mastering a really nasty laugh are all considered winners

Famous Killers: Carl Tendency

By

Helen Flannel

“Carl Tendency was hunting with a friend when tragedy struck. Attempting to climb over a mossy log, Carl slipped and his rifle fired, the bullet striking his friend squarely in the chest. It was almost certainly an accident, but still he did kill him, so I’m well within my rights including it here. I guess, given the banality of the circumstances he wasn’t really famous, but when this book comes out, he bloody well will be then.”

Famous Killers: Terence Posture

By

Helen Flannel

“Terence Posture returned from work on an otherwise uneventful day to find his wife in bed with another man. Unable to control his rage, Posture leapt upon the couple with the firm intention of killing them both; however his hands found only one throat. When all was said and done, his wife lay dead, and the unknown adulterer had fled. I think I left one of my good shoes there, too.”

Famous Killers: Xavier Smedley

By

Helen Flannel

“Xavier Smedley is a unique entry in our rogues’ gallery of famous killers, in that he is neither famous nor a killer. However, I have always disliked him, and it is my sincere hope that his very inclusion on this list will be seen by prospective romantic partners, their parents, or future employers and make his life difficult. If he didn’t want that trouble, he shouldn’t have sat in my chair.”

Famous Kings of History: King Cedric

By

Phil

King Cedric the Just but Fair was a lover of the arts. He commissioned elaborate spectacles at his Palace, often with himself as the main performer. He particularly enjoyed shadow puppetry. When not on stage, Cedric introduced several harsh and unorthodox legal reforms. During his reign, over seventy members of the aristocracy were executed—three for treason, one for conspiracy, and sixty-eight for misidentifying the animal or thing he was depicting.

Famous Kings of History: Markus Ivy

By

Phil

Markus Ivy was the fourth ruler to be named Markus: however he believed this fact diminished his importance, so he insisted that the letters after his name were merely an oddly spelled surname. No member of his court ever took issue with this, partly out of fear of reprisal and partly because... well, how could you have that conversation and not have it be unbelievably awkward?

Famous Kings of History: Old King Oswald

By

Phil

Old King Osmond had a long and peaceful reign, but as he grew older, he became obsessed with his own mortality. Actually, first he was obsessed with someone else's mortality, but then he switched to his own. He had heard the legend of the fabled Elixer of Immortality, and the fables of the legendary Secret of the Ages, so he summoned many knights of the realm, and commanded them to go forth and search for the key to eternal life. So desperate was he that he decreed, 'Any knight to return without the Elixer shall be executed.' So none of them came back, and he died in due course. It was not one of Oswald's better decrees.

Grubby Journal

By

Unknown

Grabbed sum mor traders today. Bunch a sorry weeklings, but Lusien don't seem to mind that. Longs he keeps paying wot do i care. Ben a wile since he sendd his boys round tho. He beter hurry up with that kash!

Hat, Headband, Moustache

By

Unknown

Reading this book teaches you how to play a game of Hat, Headband, Moustache with any villager in Albion. Unfortunately, most people don't follow the rules properly anymore, so you never know what's going to happen.

How to be a Crack Shot

By

Captain Arkwright

When you are shooting things just don't miss. It's as simple as that.

How to be a Master Swordsman

By

Captain Arkwright

When you find yourself in a sword fight, just make sure you gut the other fellow first. Easy, what. [laughs]

Introduction to Navigation

By

Unknown

Among the greatest dangers facing a modern mariner is the use of obsolete maps. Albion has been mapped for many centuries at least, but many of the old maps contain significant inaccuracies. This is primarily attributable to two main causes.

The Shape of the World It is only in the last century that the greatest minds in Albion have determined that the world is not flat, as it appears, but actually spherical. Obviously, rendering a sphere as a flat, two-dimensional drawing introduces errors. The Bowerstone Maritime Academy has on permanent display a 500-year-old map of Albion, which shows Bowerstone Bay as much smaller than its actual size. Further, the islands containing Knothole Glade and Hook Coast are shown due west of the main landmass, whereas in fact they lie almost directly northwest of Bowerstone and its environs.

Improved Instruments Using a sextant, navigators can calculate their position with far greater precision than was possible with earlier instruments. The remarkable sextant likewise allows cartographers to plot land features with extraordinary accuracy. Using a modern sextant, a skilled cartographer can achieve astounding precision, in some cases to within a radius as small as three miles!

Jack of Blades

By

Unknown

He is known by no one, and he is known by all. He is said to be as ancient as the Old Kingdom, and yet he has the strength of ten Heroes. Some say he is not of this world, and has come to us only for the pleasure of death and destruction. Some say he is but a legend, and the mask has covered the faces of dozens over the centuries, all claiming to be the same Jack of Blades. Whatever he is, he prevails in stories and in nightmares, and he is feared even by the Guild.

Liver of Darkness

By

Dans Mourir

Quentin stood over the sleeping form and clenched the knife tightly in his hand. Here was the woman he loved, the first person who'd shown him true affection, the wonderful creature whose very laugh made him want to sing. Could he really go through with this? One transgression, which she had tearfully labeled a terrible mistake. For that, did she deserve death? He wrestled with the question for what seemed an eternity. But while his logical mind desperately tried to stay his hand, in his liver he knew what he must do. He raised the blade. It glinted with deadly promise in the moonlight, then vanished as he plunged it into his darling.

Lucien the Lunatic

By

Unknown

Subtitled “The Unauthorized Biography”, this is one of the few surviving copies of the unofficial life story of Lord Lucien, most of them having been destroyed in a great fire (along with the anonymous author, according to some). It delves into the darker and more secretive parts of Lucien’s history, from the claims that his grandmother was a madwoman who had to be locked in the attic, to the speculation that there may have been foul play in the death of his sister. The book contends that the loss of his wife and daughter later in life plunged Lord Lucien not just into despair, but into the kind of insanity that almost certainly runs in the Fairfax blood. His strange obsession over ancient texts, his expeditions abroad, and a newfound ruthlessness would all lend credence to that theory. The book ends with a warning, “for who knows what catastrophe a man of such power and drive may bring upon us if he has indeed been consumed by lunacy?”

Lucien's Diary

By

Lucien Fairfax

Diary Extract One

Tonight I look down on the mobs crowding the Bowerstone streets and feel a dark, bitter envy. I covet their comfort, their vibrancy, their... Life. Fairfax Castle is silent. My dear Helena, my cherished Amelia... I miss you both terribly.

Diary Extract Two

There is no more certain cure for pain than anger. And I am filled with enough of that to bring the world to a smouldering halt. That people would accept death and despair as part of life—as fate—is beyond my comprehension. I find myself wanting to shout into their ignorant faces, to shake them out of their complacency. For surely they are insane. This world, and every living thing, must surely be insane.

Diary Extract Three

I resumed my research today; I can read for an hour at a stretch before that dark cloud descends upon my mind once more. The moments of clarity I have must suffice. I think. Perhaps in these papers I can find something that will ease my suffering, and even that of others. Perhaps.

Diary Extract Four

I am no longer alone in my research. Garth is from the western reaches of Samarkand and his work far outstrips my own. He shows a remarkable facility with Old Kingdom artifacts. Today I have watched in wonder as

lights, delicately spun like cobwebs, shimmered in solid stone. Remarkable.

Diary Extract Five

I have discovered that by the end of their reigns, the Archons of the Old Kingdom faced their own mortality with anger; they came to reject the inevitability of death. That we share at least this philosophy is some comfort. They made great efforts to change the world. Great efforts. When I mentioned this to Garth, he grew silent, I wonder at this.

Diary Extract Six

I've found it! Images of the Tattered Spire are now burned into my mind. It is the sun looked upon for too long, the melody that echoes ceaselessly. I've found it! The key to a new world! I pray that I have the will to do what I must.

Diary Extract Seven

Garth finally capitulated. Together we took a frigate to the site and sent down drag-lines. We circled the area for a week, growing more irritable with each day. Then today our lines hit stone! It is there! It is deep. Unfathomably deep. And yet the task is not impossible. It must not be.

Diary Extract Eight

There is no alternative; enforced labour is the only way the Spire can be completed within my lifetime. Garth shares my apprehension at this prospect, but I believe he shares my determination as well. Sometimes conventional notions of morality must be subverted, suspended, no matter how difficult that may be. Morality is a fine thing... But taken to its logical extreme, it can hold us back from true greatness.

Diary Extract Nine

Perhaps Westcliff is the answer to the enforcement dilemma. Crucible Winners must be of particularly sturdy stock; ideal recruits, physically. As for issues of obedience... I believe I may have found an answer to any

dissatisfaction that might develop once they are here. I cannot allow anything to compromise the Spire's construction.

Diary Extract Ten

Blood seems to be the key; in particular those whose lineage can be traced back to the ancient line. But where do I find such folk? Can their ancestry be determined by the naked eye? It strikes me that I have not made sufficient note of Garth's peculiarities before now. I shall enquire...

Diary Extract Eleven

I feel an unexpected joy at being so far out from the mainland. Here I can imagine that no other ties bind me to this world. No past. No pain. Just the great task before me. Now the base is almost complete. Our ships will have a harbour, at least! Sadly, today saw the first of our workers fall. This was not unexpected. We must continue regardless.

Diary Extract Twelve

Each month it becomes harder to imagine a return to mundane duties. The Spire whispers to me, still faint but already somehow familiar and comforting. As I lay my hand upon the walls that are only now beginning to take shape, I can almost feel the heartbeat of those that came before us. Today the peace was interrupted briefly by a minor uprising. I had no choice but to deal with it harshly. I do not begrudge the men that stood against me; they do not understand. But they will learn in time.

Diary Extract Thirteen

Garth informs me that four workers leapt to their death this morning. It is regrettable, and yet I must remain focused. The work is what matters. In fact, I wonder if we should not be less discriminating when it comes to the recruitment of Labour. Our progress seems less a function of their efforts and their skill, than of their sheer weight in numbers. I shall forgo the use of the collars on these men. I believe more traditional forms of discipline will be just as efficient.

Diary Extract Fourteen

Today, I felt the first stirring of Will. It was unlike anything I've ever experienced. Powerful, seductive. And all too brief. I hunger for more. Garth seemed displeased. 'Beware hubris' was all he could think to say. It is becoming clear to me that his thinking, while brilliant, is often conflicted and timid. Can he not grasp the beauty of what we shall accomplish?

Diary Extract Fifteen

My beloved Helena and Amelia still visit me whenever I close my eyes, but last night my dreams were unlike anything that have haunted me before. I saw a blind, hooded woman, and other figures, shadowed and gaunt. But sunrise has already stripped me of any meaning it may have held. Is this all my new abilities have to offer? Cryptic visions and prophetic riddles? I would sooner enjoy a full night of rest.

Diary Extract Sixteen

One question has consumed me of late; if the Spire and its component parts react to Will, would not small slivers of the Spire within a man grant him heroic powers? I had prepared an experiment to test this arresting theory, only for Garth's interruption to ruin it. He is becoming a greater impediment the further we progress. Yet I have no thought of removing him... Once indispensable for his intellect alone, he is now crucial to this great project in ways he may not even suspect. I hope he does not.

Diary Extract Seventeen

My life and my purpose lie far beyond Albion's shores now. I shall not stay long in the castle that bears my name. My facility with the technology of the ancients increases exponentially, and today I learned of two promising candidates right here within the city. Could it be that two of the titans I seek are right under my nose? They are only children, but... Oh, my dear Amelia.

Making Friends

By

Unknown

Among the gems of wisdom contained in this book are these: “It is generally considered ill-mannered to hit people”. “Albion is a materialistic place: shower people with gifts and they’ll love you for it” and “Performing good deeds will make everyone appreciate you much more.

Marriage and How to Survive It

By

Unknown

You may think you've attained your life's ambition by getting married, but your hard work has only just begun. Keeping your spouse happy isn't always easy, but maintain a healthy relationship and not only will your partner shower you with gifts, you will also find that a night's sleep in your marital home can be twice as refreshing and uplifting. Your job is to provide a home your spouse feels comfortable in, and making sure there is always enough gold for general expenses. Whatever you do, don't leave an annoyed spouse behind when you go off to explore the world. Things will only get worse. Follow this advice and you'll be happily married for years to come. Now, have you thought about kids?

Megaowl 2: Revenge of the Hen

By

Meredith Sock

A sequel to *The Sword is Mightier than the Hen*, this horror novel by the novelist Meredith Sock is a rare collector's item. Though similar in parts to the first Megaowl book, this one begins with the death of Armageddon Smith, the Hero of the original. Armageddon has now retired and has a farm of his own. One night, as he rocks on his porch, reminiscing past glories, spitting out chicken wing bones into a bucket, the ground trembles and a giant shadow blocks out the moonlight. The giant chicken, descended from the first one Armageddon killed, gets its revenge with one swoop of its left claw, kicking the old hero into the horizon. This shocking opening sets the scene for the unremitting carnage that follows. The bleak ending in which the megaowl takes its own life may have contributed to the book being banned.

Megafowl

By

Meredith Sock

Subtitled “The Sword is Mightier than the Hen” this horror/adventure novel by popular author Meredith Sock (Who was as renowned as he was reviled), tells the story of a giant, prehistoric chicken terrorising a land of farmers. Scenes like the one where Megafowl creeps from behind a barn to peck a whole yard of farm hands to death are said to be responsible to for a shortage of agricultural workers in the years that followed the book’s publication. The tale ends happily, however, when a Hero by the name of Armageddon Smith arrives to slay the mighty beast. The sequel, “Megafowl 2: Revenge of the Hen” was banned for fear it would drive communities like Oakfield into economic ruin. Copies are rare and highly sought after.

Monty's Proposal

By

Monty

Darling, run away with me.

Like two doves, we shall rise on life's gentle breeze to soar above the world in our bliss, forever embracing in the clouds. -Monty? ?

Murgo's Big Book of Trading

By

Murgo

Murgo's book contains several chapters on subjects such as hoodwinking the public, passing old junk as precious, and the importance of a persuasive voice. More useful are the chapters on the basics of trading. A keen eye for sales and shortages is considered an essential skill, as is the ability to track down items at a reduced price. These can be sold in regions where stock is running low for greater profit. Murgo reminds readers that professional traders can have a big impact on a town's economy, driving prices up or down, and effecting welfare of hundreds of people with their choices. And one must never forget the advantage of having a winning personality when it comes to sweet-talking shopkeepers into giving you better deals.

Norm and Aggie

By

Unknown

This sweet tale of two retired schoolteachers that find love late in life is a real departure from Meredith Sock's usually salacious affairs. Widower Norm and spinster Aggie meet on a picnic by Bower Lake, and immediately realize they are meant for each other. Over the next seven hundred pages, their romance blossoms as they take nice long walks, sit in front of a roaring fire shelling peas and reminisce about former pupils while discussing the decline of modern education. Despite the tender nature of the novel, readers was shocked by the ending, in which the septuagenarian couple steals a guards musket and hold up a general store. After that stand-off that lasts several hours, Norm and Aggie rush out into the street, wrinkled hands clasped together, and into a hail of gunfire.

Pretty on the Inside

By

Unknown

House improvements and decorations aren't just for landlords and property tycoons out to make a profit. Everyone can benefit! Wouldn't you rather wake up in a beautifully hand-crafted mahogany bed than a rickety collection of wood held together by little more than termite corpses and night sweat? If you have a family, it won't be long before they're clamouring for more spiritually satisfying furnishings. So go on, help your town become a nicer place. Decorate your home!

Reaver on Reaver

By

Reaver

Reaver on Reaver. An autobiography. Prologue. Dear devotees, you hold in your hands a slice of history. An unadulterated and adult-rated account on one of the longest, fullest and most scandalous lives ever lived. Mine. For the intellectually-challenged amongst you—and I can say with some certitude that such a definition includes most of you, my dear, dear readers—I present here a brief, abridged extract of one my least demanding chapters. I do hope you can keep up. Who knows? Perhaps your dim little minds will be encouraged to consume the entire volume. Not that I care a jot. I have your money already. And should you have shoplifted a copy, or far worse borrowed one from those appalling institutions known as libraries, be warned that I will find you and perform many of the acts described in chapter twelve upon your person. Now read on, my loves.

Chapter 17. The senile old hag was as good as her word, and I found myself magically transported to the land of Samarkand, thousands of miles from the bloody Spire. There my good fortune ended however, as I soon found that insufferable bore Garth materialising beside me. This so-called Scholar turned out to have little to teach me about his homeland. Little of interest at least. I had come seeking hot nights, exotic substances and uninhibited people, and found an excess of the first, a miserly amount of the second, and a definite shortage of the third. Still, my stay was not without its highlights. One particular evening springs to mind. My last one. I'd followed my humourless, pedantic companion into what I can only describe as the worst tavern ever to deserve such a moniker. Its pitiful cordials and feeble spirits did nothing to improve my mood, and the air was so thick with stodgy conversation, one grew constipated merely by listening. It was then I had the brilliant notion, that would simultaneously catapult me out of that humdrum

country and put an end to Garth's miserable existence, as well as diverting me for several minutes. I stood up in front the sober crowd and.... And... well, my darlings, there the extract ends. You will have to read the rest of the book to find out what happened. Cliffhangers are such a cheap authorial trick, I know, but one that is not beyond me (as you shall see when you reach the end of Chapters 2, 6, 7 and 22). Now run ahead, you little scamps. plunge your clammy, thirsty fingers into the pages before you. I hope you enjoy reading their contents as much as I've enjoyed living them.

Reaver's Diary

By

Reaver

A Page from Reaver's Diary (1/5):

"This is my first night back since the renovations, and I must say that chap from Rookridge has done a splendid job. A small miracle considering he'd recently lost three toes and two family members.

But what was I to do? He wouldn't be persuaded to abandon the construction of some worthless temple to aid me in my time of crisis. And his predecessor had simply the worst taste in furnishings. I was generous to let him live as long as I did. Now that awful scent of burned wood and flesh has dissipated, perhaps I shall throw a party. Ursula and Penelope will be my guests of honour. Shame Andrew crumbled to ashes in the fire. What a sweet young fellow... But such a heavy sleeper."

A Page from Reaver's Diary (2/5):

"It's good to be home after these three last months at sea. My ship barely made it back to port under the weight of such spoils, and then only after we disposed of those less valuable.

It was a pity to see my new brides sink into the ocean. But their sizeable attributes rendered them unfeasibly heavy. And I'd already tossed all non-essential crew members into the ever undulating arms of the kraken.

I believe my most cherished memory from this voyage has to be the discovery island far to the south of Albion, among waters of an indescribable blue. There, men and women consort in ways even I found slightly objectionable.

They have little need for clothing under that gentle sun, and their fondness for a syrupy liqueur made from an obscenely-shaped fruit made it almost too easy to plunder their possessions. I might have stayed there forever, had it not been for the monkey incident.”

A Page from Reaver’s Diary (3/5):

“I am filled with a wonderful weariness tonight. My bedroom is far too crowded to get a good night’s sleep, and I’m too indolent to eject any of my lovely guests. Instead I thought I would sit in my study sipping a restorative beverage, and enjoying my own company.

It reminds me of my very first evening in this house. My bedfellows were fewer and less charming then, but I had less energy left anyways. It isn’t every day that one murders a pirate king, and takes his place.

Oh, I had the vigour of youth back then. Real youth. How many must have I killed on my way to this very room? I shall never forget the look on the brigand’s face, one so ill-suited to royalty of any kind. How he came to such a position being so slow on the draw is a perfect mystery.

I feel somewhat reinvigorated now, and I hear stirrings upstairs. Perhaps the night isn’t quite over yet.”

A Page from Reaver’s Diary (4/5):

“I received an unusual visitor today, an adventurer who’d toddled in through Wraithmarsh, losing neither life, limb nor sanity on the way. This alone would have been sufficient to mark him/her as a unique individual, but once I’d learned he’d /she’d escaped from the demented grip of none other than Lord Lucien, I had knew I had quite a catch in my hands.

I sent an emissary to speak with Lucien and came to a lucrative arrangement. Since the time of the tribute is nearing - I can already feel the wrinkles begin to form on my face - I sent the poor sod/cow to the Shadow Court to keep him/her busy. I’m sure the old loon in the Spire won’t mind if I post him/her back slightly decrepit. Should make it easier to keep him/her locked up.

I think I'll celebrate my good fortune by commissioning a new portrait. I've heard of a chap with some sort of magical apparatus that renders almost lifelike results. I believe his name was Barnum, I shall have him brought to me today."

A Page from Reaver's Diary (5/5):

"I awoke from the nightmare again. One would think more than two hundred years would suffice to blunt its steel. But still I see Oakvale devoured by shadows. Still those shrieks fill the air. How much longer must I live before they fall silent? Such dreams belong to another time. To another man. One who would recoil from the things I've done since that night. Who might even care about all the sacrifices I've offered up to the odious Judges over... over how long? Hundreds of years?

I see that man as he was back then. As beautiful as me, as fiery as me, but so delicate. So breakable. And so afraid of death. I see him summon the Shadow Court into this world, oblivious to the consequences. He asks them for immunity for the disease of time and death, and they grant it.

Then I see him running madly through fields, the realisation of just what price he has unwittingly paid hanging like a tragedy mask from his face. He falls to his knees before the town he called home—now a dark circus of screams. Hers is among them, but he can do nothing to stop it. What a weak, despicable man he is. But I am not he. I am Reaver. And I will sleep much better after this chalice of wine."?

Rose's Diary (Dream)

By

Rose

Today is going to be another brilliant day, I just know it. Mum and Dad have gone to town to buy us lots of food and toys because they love us so much. So it's just me and little Sparrow. We're going to have so much fun!

I'm so lucky to have the best little brother/sister in the world. I know we'll always be together and nothing bad will ever, ever happen to us while we stay here.

Rose's Diary (Real)

By

Rose

The latest entry, written over the rough drawing of a castle, reads: “I managed to find a nice piece of charcoal this morning, so I can finally start writing again. I still haven’t finished putting down the story about the warrior girl who fights snow monsters. Sparrow always likes listening to that one - sends him/her right to sleep! It’s not so easy for me. Winter is getting colder and soon our shelter won’t be anywhere near enough. We’ll freeze to death if we don’t find something better. And the family of travellers who let us stay in their caravan last winter haven’t come back this year. It was nice having someone to look after us for a change. If only we could find some secret passage into the castle... We’re small enough that no one would notice us. We’d be like ghosts, or like mice, hiding in the walls. We’d tip-toe out when everyone goes to bed and raid the larder. I bet they have so much food in there, they’d never even notice. Bah, day-dreaming isn’t going to get us anywhere. You have to think of something, Rose. You’re the big sister, remember?”

Scrawled Parchment

By

Unknown

The fragment reads: “The air is running out and I have hardly the strength to scratch the words on this letter. The lamp was extinguished hours ago, and my life cannot be long in following it. Now that I’ve resigned to my fate, however, I am concerned solely with my duty as the eldest of the Grey children, rightful heir to the office of the Bowerstone Mayoralty. I can only hope that these words are one day found, and the truth they speak become known to all. I die at the hand of my sister, Elvira. The new Lady Grey is a murderess. I grow weary now... Sleep is upon me and...” The final Scrawl is illegible.

Sisters' Diary

By

Unknown

“Harvest, Day 15 - Mother is away again. She never tells us where. I think father is a little sad when she goes.”

“Harvest, Day 18 - I had that nightmare again last night. There's a big room, and right in the middle of it there's a big swooshing light that feels like it's going to suck me in. I still couldn't see what was in the middle of it. I don't think I ever want to.”

“Harvest, Day 19 - I had another dream. I was opening birthday presents and I was so happy. Then something happened, and it was so horrible it woke me up. I think that part was only a dream though.”

“Harvest, Day 21 - It's my birthday today! I bet my brother forgets again, but at least mother will be back. I got up early to look out over the sea, and now I'm going to play in the top field.”

Sock It to ‘Em

By

Unknown

(This is an Expression manual)

Entertain children and easily pleased adults by pretending that your hand is actually a person! It’s amazing! (Use to learn the Sock Puppet expression.)

The Amazing Exploits of Baron Barnaby Beadle

By

Barnaby Beadle

Balverines: I've killed fifty of them. With nothing but a rusty cutlass. The Moon: I've been there, in a great balloon. It's amazing and almost never rains. Spells and that: I know them all. Cuisine: Every dish ever prepared, I've eaten it. Inventions: That was me. I invented them. Oh and I wrote this book. Not impressed? You would be if you knew I was illiterate. And paralyzed. And blind.

The Arena

By

Unknown

Heroes left the Guild and made their choices, good or evil, in Albion. But, with the freedom to do as they chose, they often clashed. Sometimes they fought to the death. These bouts were often arranged in advance and people traveled from miles around to see them. Eventually the Arena was built, and the bouts became bigger and more spectacular. Creatures from across Albion were captured and brought there for Heroes to kill. One rule remained from the olden days, though. Should either combatant so choose, the battles could be to the death.

The Art of Seduction

By

Unknown

(This is an Expression manual.)

Learn the sophisticated secrets of Albion's greatest lovers. (Use this book to learn the Seduce expression.)

The Balverine Slayer

By

Unknown

This book is a worshipful, some say exaggerated, history of Knothole Glade's most famous Balverine Slayer, Scarlet Robe. It tells the story of her first encounter with one of the beasts, at the tender age of fifteen, when she astounded Knothole Glade's elder warriors by killing a particularly fierce Balverine using only a piece of wood. It goes on to give a detailed account of her stay with the Heroes' Guild, her pivotal role in the Great Balverine Extermination battle and her triumph in the Arena.

The Bloodline

By

Unknown

Though the Old Kingdom vanished centuries ago, pieces of it remain scattered throughout Albion. The Guild in its magnificent glory, ruined architectural corpses, dark and unholy secrets throbbing beneath the earth. But more survives than stone and magic. For there is still among us the living legacy of the Kingdom itself. A lineage that is connected with all that made the Kingdom great and somehow ended up destroying it. Whether they are the descendants of Archon himself or of the makers of the Sword, or perhaps of those who managed to extinguish its power, it is not known. Though generations separate them from the days of the Fall, there walk today survivors of this bloodline, and an ancient power courses through their veins. They may live as Heroes or they may hide among the masses, but their link to the Sword wielded by Archon himself, the Sword of Aeons, is confirmed in all the documents I have unearthed. If I can find the living descendants of this bloodline, I may be able to uncover what happened to the Sword, and perhaps the days of the Old Kingdom can be restored. There is one to whom all the signs direct me. Though she lives a quiet life now, she has done much to mark her as the one. And now the bloodline continues through her children. A son and a daughter. And the power that lives in her will be passed on to them one day.

The Book of Doom

By

Unknown

If you read this book you are doomed. Don't read another line. Not another word, all right? You're still reading, aren't you? What part of 'Don't read another line' do you not understand? Well, it's too late now, you've read it. You're doomed! You never should have read this. And I probably shouldn't have written it, actually.

The Book of Mysteries

By

Ignatius Boatload

Extracts from the diary of a hermit. Day one: I have taken leave of the world. All my life I have spoken with my fellow man about truth and meaning, and I have found neither, from this day forth, no more talk. Enlightenment must be earnestly sought, not idly discussed. Anything else is a meaningless distraction. Day 52: Long have I sat in this cave, eating only leaves of the golden flower, and meditating upon the divine. Soon I will become one with the universe! I can feel it! Day 182: Solitude is the great purifier. Perhaps solitude itself is divine? Through its purity, I let go of my earthly self and with doing so become one with all. Day 313: I was meditating in divine silence, really close to becoming one with all, Myra from the village came to check on me. I told her I was fine, and she left. And now I'm mainly thinking about becoming one with her. Mmm Hmm.

The Dogs of War

By

Unknown

All books in the series have the same content.

Written by a member of the Canite tribe, native of the northern regions of Samarkand, and famed for their use of dogs in warfare. Use this book to train your dog in the art of fighting, increasing the damage he can do in combat.

The Dragons

By

Unknown

Many Dragons lived in Albion, but the Old Kingdom huntsmen killed them for sport. The survivors fled to the mountains and the Northern Wastes and overtime they grew less powerful, and their fiery breath less dangerous. Without man they had no natural enemies. But a dragon is a dragon and to this day when an Albion child has an accident in their underpants it's known as 'Seeing a Dragon'. Although sometimes it's just known as 'pooing yourself, you dirty little boy'.

The End is Almost Nigh

By

Arthur Dandelion

This is a collection of predictions and doom-mongerings from the mystic and soothsayer Arthur Dandelion. His more cryptic visions, such as the one about two brothers of little wit who shall release howling death upon a town of blood, have invited speculation and much shrugging of shoulders. Among his other prophecies is the one that foresees the invention of a machine that will aid in the cleaning of soiled garments. His most famous warning is the one that predicts the end of the world. According to Dandelion, it will not come suddenly, but: “the ground shall shake, and the past shall erupt into the present in a most bloody manner. Though perhaps a strange being shall transform into a dragon and lay waste to all that lives long time before that happens. What do I know? This isn’t an exact science or anything.”

The Extraordinary Homunculus of Baron von Orfen

By

Helen Flannel

Baron von Orfen was a dabbler in the black arts, particularly alchemy. As a young nobleman, he applied a sample of his own blood, mixed with various alchemical substances, to a mandrake root and created a small, diminutive version of himself—a homunculus. It was his dark aim that this creation would become a vessel for any ailment or malady which would otherwise plague the Baron himself. From that day forward, Baron von Orfen suffered no disease, no wound, no wart, nary any affliction at all. Thus it was that the Baron lived well past the age of eighty, until one day he accidentally knocked the homunculus into an alembic of powerful acid. There it promptly dissolved, and the horrified Baron, seeing this, steeled himself for the worst... but was fine. Turns out he just had a really amazing constitution.

The Fall of the Guild

By

Unknown

The following is excerpted from one of countless tracts which circulated in Albion shortly before the destruction of the Heroes' Guild.

“Citizen! Are you tired of fawning over Heroes not out of love, but fear? Tired of Heroes receiving special privileges? Tired of being a second-class citizen? This is a call to action: join the Oakvale Anti-Hero League today!

Heroes once protected Albion. But in the absence of the great threats of old, threats like Jack of Blades, Heroes protect us from nothing. Instead they menace, extort, and bully the people they once served. It is time to turn our backs on these relics of another time and set our sights on the future! Ask yourself, whom shall we thank for the prosperity of our age? Heroes? No! Engineers. Doctors. Inventors and natural philosophers. These people give us larger and safer cities, healthier crops, cleaner water, longer and fuller lives.

The people can solve their own problems. The Heroes' Guild is no longer needed, nor wanted, in Albion. We will deliver this message, by force if necessary! In the age of the firearm, we do not need Heroes - nor shall we fear them!”

The Finger

By

Unknown

(This is an Expression manual)

Sometimes the only way to let people know how you feel is to show them the finger. The one in the middle is usually the best. (Use to learn the Insult expression.)

The Grasping Avarice of Kings and their Lackeys

By

George Clamp

“King Logan’s greed knows no bounds! How cruelly does he fleece our citizens of their hard-won coin through his onerous and unjust taxes! And how cruelly does his lickspittle lackey, that rapacious dog, Reaver, harshly exploit his poor, unfortunate workers! The time has come for change, real change—what we need is a democracy! I know, I know, I’m always on about republics, but I did some further reading and I really think democracy offers a pretty compelling package. Shake off the yoke of monarchy, good people, and join me in the glorious struggle to create a new democracy! Or a republic is fine if you really have your heart set on that, but I do think we’d be missing out on a few things. As usual, my offer to oversee all aspects of government during the transition is still on the table.”

The Guild of Zeroes

By

Unknown

This satirical pamphlet purports to be a journal of a Zero in training, and is a thinly veiled attack on the Guild, the self-claimed superiority of its members and the cult of celebrity that surrounds them. The author disappeared shortly after its publication.

The Hierarchy of Weapons

By

Unknown

The close range weapons of Albion are broadly divided into four types based on their materials and process of manufacture. The first and lowliest weapons are made of Iron, usually forged by blacksmiths. Better are the steel weapons. These are stronger, lighter and sharper. Only the Steelmasters can create these. Next are the Obsidian Items. This secret, magical material is still not understood, but it's believed to be dark and evil. The weapons are often blackened and twisted, but very light, strong and powerful. Then there are the Master Weapons. Blessed, worked to a high degree and anointed, these are the best a combatant can get, apart from the Legendary Weapons. These have names and are unique. Very few have seen them, and fewer still have ever wielded one.

The Invocation of the Watchers

By

Lemegeton

I Conjure thee, O thou Mighty and Potent Prince of Darkness, Almadiel, who wanders in the Aethyr. I conjure thee forthwith to appear here with thy attendants, in this the witching hour of night! Stand before me in this Circle, herein inscribed. Come forth, in a fair and comely shape, to do my will in all things that I shall desire of you! Do not appear as the Shadow, I abjure thee! Here be the Seal of Almadiel, by which I command you!

The Mibbs-Spagmo Theory of Gluttony

By

Mibbs

The first core principle of our economic theory can be summarized thusly: greed is good for you. Now, let us clarify who we mean by 'you': not you. At least, not directly. Greed is directly good for the government, because the more you spend to acquire material possessions, feed your family, etc, the stronger the economy becomes, and the more the government earns in taxes. A strong economy coupled with a strong government creates an environment in which progress is limitless and virtually anything is possible, and therein lies the 'indirect' benefit of your greed. Of course, given your greediness, you will likely not survive long enough to benefit from society's affluence, being grossly overweight yourself, but think of your children. Yes, they will be predisposed to obesity and an early death just as you were, but their short lives will be far more luxurious than yours. Which brings us to the second core principle: quality is more important than quantity.

The Northern Wastes

By

Unknown

The nine seas surround Albion, but to the North is the Wasteland. Some say there's nothing, and others that it is Jack of Blades true home. The old Scribes say that it was once a mighty empire before the glaciers came. Libraries of arcane knowledge still exist beneath the ice, and those who once lived there sleep deeply beneath the cold blanket, ready to reawaken when the time comes and Albion is ruled again by one man.

The Oakvale Raid

By

Unknown

Written by one of the few survivors, this is a harrowing account of the night Oakvale was burnt to the ground in the most savage Bandit raid in Albion's recorded history. Despite the honesty of the author's grief, the book raised some controversy by refuting the established theory that laid the blame on the Bandits of the Twinblade clan, and suggesting that the feared Jack of Blades masterminded the attack.

The Old Kingdom

By

Unknown

Long ago the kingdom of Archon ruled every corner of Albion. The World was peaceful and in perfect order, though many wondered if the force that held it altogether was not corrupt. For Archon had in his possession a sword of vast and mysterious power, and Albion's elders wrote of gradual changes overcoming their leader. These changes spread to the kingdom itself. Strange structures were erected round the world, and huge armoured figures were seen guarding four hubs of energy and Archon's Castle itself. Every living thing was touched by the Sword's influence, and soon foul creatures the world had never seen before darkened the people's lives. And yet no record exists of what caused the fall of the Kingdom. So suddenly, so irrevocably, Archon and the Sword disappeared, but the darkness remained.

The Other Land

By

Unknown

During the Old Kingdom, people fled the hatred, the pain within Albion in their masses. Boats sped from the shores in every direction. And one group of emigrants pitched up in paradise. Warm seas, palm trees and coral sands beckoned. And the inhabitants welcomed the visitors with food, comfort and grace. But the people of Albion had headcolds and when they passed these onto the islanders, almost all of them died. And the Albion Settlers, not knowing how to farm the weird fruits, catch fish or hunt the wild pigs and chickens, died too. But the few islanders who survived buried the dead and rebuilt their paradise. With new, impenetrable beach defences.

The Pale Balverine

By

Unknown

There was an Archer who believed he was the best in the land. He was also a lord, but had fallen out of favour with his people and had been imprisoned for lying. Determined to prove himself on his release, he set off to battle fearsome Balverines. He was bitten but did not die. Instead he changed and over time became a powerful, evil Balverine. Normal weapons hardly hurt him. So thick was his skin. But he hadn't counted on a red-robed woman's solid silver arrow of truth which pierced him and killed him.

The Pangs of Sunset

By

Unknown

Theresa had said 'take my hand.' Hammer had done as she was told, and at the touch of the warm flesh she felt a surge within her. A feeling at first that she couldn't identify- it was scary, but it was arousing too. She'd had thoughts of women before but never acted on them. Now it was all she could think about- it made her excited; as excited she had been the night she secretly spied on Garth and Reaver. They were so forceful with each other, and yet so tenderly yielding. The memory of that night brought a sickeningly delicious pit to her stomach. Her pulse quickened, and she let her robe slip from her shoulders and stepped into the warm bath, thinking of the two men. She began to recreate that night in her mind.

Next Chapter: Dark Wizard, Passionate Rogue.

The Perv's Handbook

By

Unknown

(This is an Expression manual)

Learn how to sway your hips and shake that ass like the true sexual deviant you are. (Use to learn the Vulgar Thrust expression.)

The Repentant Alchemist

By

Philipth Morley

This is a play by Philipth Morley, Albion's most celebrated dramatist. It is the story of a Bowerstone innkeeper who discovers his wife is cheating on him with every man in town. As revenge, he concocts a new ale with the peculiar properties of making anyone who drinks it die horribly if they should have indulged relations with the innkeeper's unfaithful wife. He soon finds himself without living customers and decides to partake of his malevolent beverage himself.

The Rotten Apple

By

Unknown

This classic political treaty uses the first metaphor to provide a theoretical solution to all of society's problems. The most controversial of these ideas involves the abolishment of the Heroes' Guild (symbolized by a rare breed of crop-destroying insect immune to most pesticides). By an extraordinary coincidence, when taken literally, most of the advice is also extremely effective in actual fruit farming.

The Secret of Castle Fairfax, Part I

By

Unknown

Though it came to be known by its present name some ninety years ago, when it was bought by the noble and illustrious Fairfax family, the castle was built more than fifty years previous than that. And, if this book is to be believed, it has a long tradition of strange and unexplained events. It was commissioned by the reclusive alchemist Leo Head after his potion of youth made him a fortune. Leo swore never to make the potion again and retired to the grand halls of the castle. It was rumoured that he was working on a new, even more fantastic potion, but Leo was never seen in public again. When the authorities entered the castle seeking an annual tithe, they found only the corpse of an unidentified old woman.

The Secret of Castle Fairfax, Part II

By

Unknown

After the strange disappearance of the alchemist Leo Head, the next owner of the castle was a ruthless man known only as the Count. These were fretful years for Bowerstone. People went missing never to be found again, and there was talk of torture and unholy rituals being conducted in the castle. All that ended when the Fairfax family took over, bringing an era of prosperity to the town. Though even then gossip about the castle didn't end.

Ingrid Fairfax died giving birth to Lucien's Father, but it was said that she was an unstable woman, and that the news of her death was a cover for the truth: that she had been locked in an attic, to see out her madness in seclusion. Lucien's father grew up to be a good man, beloved by all, though he never recovered from the death of his daughter, Ellie. Only a very young Lucien witnessed her death, powerless to stop it. Many would remember this early tragedy when an even greater one would befall Lord Lucien later in life.

The Sock Method

By

Unknown

Subtitled ‘How to Make Yourself Sexier in Ten Days’, this guide advises its readers to master really Heroic poses, learn to flirt, wear stylish clothes and avoid bad haircuts.

The Tailor's Tragedy

By

Philipth Morley

This is a play by Philipth Morley, Albions most celebrated dramatist. The title's tailor is a young man from far away lands who washes up on the shores of Oakvale after the merchant ship he is traveling in is torn apart by storms. Thanks to the generosity of the townspeople, he is able to open a store, and the outlandish style of his suits and dresses soon make him a success. He eventually marries a beautiful girl and dies a happy old man surrounded by loving children. The title is thought to be a misprint.

The Tale of Maxley

By

Unknown

As everyone knows, Hobbes are stupid creatures. But every so often a clever one comes along. Maxley was one such Hobbe, and tired of eating raw flesh and sleeping in streams, he left to seek his fortune in the world of humans. He murdered a nobleman and stole his clothes, dressed up and walked tall on the road to Bowerstone. When he arrived people complimented him on his appearance. When he answered, his Hobbe grunting gave him away. The guards killed Maxley and put his head on a spike. It is better to keep quiet and be thought an idiot then[sic] to open one's mouth and prove it.

The Tale of Twinblade

By

Unknown

Heroes, good or evil, need self-discipline. And Twinblade, a young, powerful swordsman, was no different. After graduation, he stopped taking Quests at the Guild when he realized he could take what he wanted from anyone. His love of gold and growing resentment of other Heroes drove him to live in the woods as a thief. His strength and ruthlessness led him to face and kill other Bandit Clan Leaders and he united the Forest Clans and became King of the Bandits. But deep inside him, Twinblade never lost the code of honour and respect the Guild had instilled in him.

The Temple of Shadows

By

Unknown

The Cult of Shadows was established shortly after the dissolution of the Temple of Skorm. A group of especially wicked men, loyal to their own vicious nature rather than the god they had chosen to serve, went on a pilgrimage through Albion, seeking a new spiritual anchor to their malice. They found just that in the ruins of an Old Kingdom cathedral in Rookridge, where a dark presence had long dwelt. For the next two decades, the members of the Temple of Shadows were involved in foul deeds across the land, taking sacrificial victims into their underground chamber, and recruiting only the most evil and remorseless of people into their ranks. The Cult came to a sudden end on a winter's night, when the Shadow worshippers conducted a ritual that would cause the Ultimate Shadow to manifest itself physically in this world. But unable to control the vast powers they were unleashing, every member of the Temple perished in terrible agonies. It wasn't until hundreds of years later that a vile man by the name of Cornelius Grim restored the Temple. Finding recruits as malevolent as himself proved difficult however, and it is said that most current Shadow worshippers are nothing but upper-class twits for whom evil is merely a hobby.

The Trials of Aarkan

By

Unknown

This epic poem was once taught in every school, but its themes were regurgitated so often by lesser verse makers it lost all its power and is now virtually forgotten. It tells the story of a young boy whose village is destroyed by a band of savages. Orphaned, he is taken in by an old warrior who teaches him the ways of the sword. As a grown man, he slays an ancient evil and restores order to his world

The Trigamist

By

Unknown

This cheap and racy novel tells the story of a no good scoundrel Geroneous Wilkout, a young man who marries three women in three different towns and pays the ultimate price. Having posed as a Hero from the Guild in order to win the three ladies' hearts, Geroneous finds juggling three households a difficult but rewarding lifestyle, until one day his deceit catches up with him. After a mix-up in his busy schedule in the more intimate of his matrimonial duties, the three wives discover their husbands secret and devise a terrible punishment: a visit from the Mythical Castrating Mountain Monkey.

The Tyranny of Tyrants

By

George Clamp

King Logan is an evil tyrant! Monarchy—what is it good for? Never should the lives of the many be controlled by one man! Or woman—seen that, it doesn't work either. Anyway; what we need is a republic! In the past, I've called for democracy, but I was speaking to some people and they really opened my eyes to this republic thing. Rise up to overthrow the monstrous autocrat! In the meantime, appoint me as Supreme Ruler! I will faithfully oversee the transition from monarchy to republic, strictly on a temporary basis! Really. No, really. I mean it! You can trust me!

The Ugly Guide

By

Unknown

Though admittedly writing for a small market, the author of this manual has many handy tips on making yourself less attractive. Among the chief ideas are: eating plenty of fattening pies, releasing that uncomfortable build-up of bowel gases and making rude gestures to your would-be admirers.

The Very Unsafe Book for Boys, Vol. 1: Hang Gliders

By

Konan Wiggledung

Get about one hundred handkerchiefs (stealing them is an economical alternative to buying them). Stitch, glue or tape them together. Tie a string to each corner. Go to the highest place you can find. Put two strings in each hand and then jump off! Note, this activity does pose significant risks, and should not be attempted except under favourable wind conditions. Even then, you'd have to be completely insane.

The Very Unsafe Book for Boys, Vol. 2: Ovens

By

Konan Wiggledung

Grease one large round cake pan. Combine flour, eggs, butter, sugar, and salt in a large mixing bowl, bake thoroughly, then pour mixture into cake pans. Bake for thirty minutes and allow to cool. Note, this activity is in fact perfectly safe and most appropriate for right before your mum discovers you've done any of the other things described in my book.

The Very Unsafe Book for Boys, Vol. 3: Boxing

By

Konan Wiggledung

Boxing is a wonderful activity for boys. The first thing you'll need, besides a mate willing to let you hit him, is a pair of boxing gloves. These can be purchased from a leather craftsman or stolen out of the locker of a boy you don't like. The idea behind boxing gloves is twofold: to protect the boxer's hands, and to minimise injury to the opponent. At least, that's what you should tell your mum when you ask her to buy them for you—she'll think you sound very mature. Be sure to use that word 'twofold', as well; that will really impress her. Anyway, the real point of boxing gloves is they allow you to hide large, heavy metal weights which will really knock your opponent's lights out. That'll teach him.

Theresa's Letter

By

Theresa

Dear Brother,

I have always known we were special, and now I have found proof. This book tells of a bloodline from the days of the Old Kingdom, and its connection to a sword powerful enough to rule the world. A bloodline mother belonged to, I am certain. A bloodline you and I belong to as well. Perhaps with your eyes you will understand it better than I do. I speak to the pages, but they don't speak back. Theresa

Three Haiku

By

Miko the Bard

Terrible beauty,
Building scream in agony
Oakvale is burning.
Warrior or Mage,
Choose evil or choose goodness,
A beard or moustache.
Sword of Albion,
Sleeping until the true Blood,
Flows red on its blade

Traders' Game

By

Unknown

(This is an Expression manual.)

Rule book for the popular traders' game "Hat, Headband, Moustache." (Use to learn the Hat, Headband, Moustache expression.)

Treasure Hunting

By

Larry Stalagmite

Written by renowned treasure hunter Larry Stalagmite, who successfully trained dogs to aid him in his search for bounty. Use this book to train your dog to sniff out better treasure.

Understanding The Albion Psyche

By

Benny Skinful

This book by the behaviourologist Benny Skinful prods and probes that most quirky and unpredictable of animals: the fully-grown Albion human. Described as a deeply opinionated lot, fond of gossip and flip-flopping from a friendly disposition to a hostile one and then back again at the slightest provocation, the people of Albion can be affected by a great number of things. What they see you do, what you say to them, what you wear, what you give them, what they hear about you.... All these things go into the great messy bucket that is their minds. As Skinful says, “take care to really know your subject, whether you intend to befriend it or provoke it, as each individual has its own set of likes, dislikes and all manner of personality idiosyncrasies.

Warrant for Arson

By

Derek

Ronnie “Rhymes With” Parsonist

Wanted for: 19 counts of Setting Fire to Public Property or an Officer of the Peace.

Warrant for Assault

By

Derek

Nicky “The Nickname” Chalmers

Known Aliases: Nicky “The Nickname” Chalmers (no relation).

Wanted For: Assault With a Deadly Weapon; Assault With a Potentially Deadly Weapon; Assault With a Weapon We Can’t Believe Could Possibly Be Deadly but Unfortunately Was.

Wanted Dead or Mortally Wounded

Warrant for Burglary

By

Derek

Allan “Alliteration” Altamont

Wanted for: Breaking and Entering; Breaking and Smashing; Breaking and Repeatedly Stomping Upon; Breaking, Gluing Back Together, and Trying to Pass Off as Not Ever Having Been Broken in the First Place.

Warrant for Guntoting

By

Derek

Andrew “The Stammer” M-M- Miller

Wanted for: Assault With a Firearm; Stealing Glances at a Firearm;
Whispering Sweet Nothings to a Firearm; Proposal of Marriage to a Firearm;
Hurling a Firearm into a Public Waterway in Anger. Also one count of Public
Intoxication.?

Warrant for Sneakiness

By

Derek

Leroy “Unremarkable” Stone

Known aliases: Leroy Ten- Fingers, Leroy One-Nose, Leroy Two-Eyes,
Leroy Has- Hair, Leroy Is-Alive.

Wanted for: Suspicious Though Otherwise Unremarkable Behaviour

Wedding Bells

By

Unknown

A book of tips to make anyone fall in love with you until they're ready to say "I do". It suggests you get to know the object of your affection, so you are better able to perform their favourite romantic expressions, surprise them with their favourite gifts and take them on dates to their favourite places. Coming on too strong can make them become bored with your advances though, so don't be too eager to woo them quickly.

Windbreaker Rule Book

By

Unknown

This guide to making yourself obnoxious, includes the following tips: learn to swear and do it whenever you please, hit people for no reason at all, and break wind with wild abandon.

You Are Not a Bad Person

By

Unknown

Originally written to help reformed Bandits and serial killers to become accepted members of society, this book teaches you how to appear less scary to impressionable villagers. It seems not waving your weapons about, avoiding dark clothes and evil-looking tattoos, and letting out the odd giggle all work a treat.